MINUTES OF THE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 4, 1997

PROJECTS REVIEWED

Seattle Center Flag Pavilion
State Route 519
Haller Lake Maintenance Facilities

Convened: 8:00 AM

Adjourned: 1:00 PM

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Barbara Swift, Chair
Moe Batra
Gerald Hansmire
Jon Layzer
Rick Sundberg

STAFF PRESENT

Marcia Wagoner
Peter Aylsworth
Vanessa Murdock

090497.1 Project: **SEATTLE CENTER FLAG PAVILION**
Phase: Pre-design
Presenters: Dave Buchan, Seattle Center
Bob Hull, The Miller|Hull Partnership
Bob Shrosbree, EDAW
Attendees: Terry Plumb, Seattle Center
Time: 1 hr. (0.3%)

The site of the proposed Flag Pavilion will function as a central green space element for the Seattle Center, used for many various cultural festivals. The cost of the project is estimated at $5-6 million. The Seattle Center has $1.2 million and a 3 year window for fundraising is being considered.

The site is defined by the Children's Theater at one end, the International Fountain at the other end, and Key Arena and the Center House on the sides. The design team developed 5 different schemes with the preferred scheme being an under ground structure opening out toward the fountain and a belvedere, or terrace, at the roof level. This scheme preserves the views over the site toward the fountain with minimal visual obstacles. An elevator in the northeast corner of the belvedere will connect the two levels of the structure. The majority of the site is landscaped with the proposed structure at the back of a bowl shaped green space. The site will be stitched together with the fountain by a green frame of trees and landscaping.

Discussion:

Layzer: I see a great improvement in this scheme over the previous proposal. It has a new set of challenges to deal with, but seems to better support the Master Plan. Developing the loading area, without infringing on the pedestrian character, and the open space will be very challenging.

Buchan: Another challenge is making people feel comfortable, psychologically, in using a sub-terrain structure. The design team has done a great job dealing with this issue and developing a substantial entry element.

Layzer: Some of these challenges can become tremendous opportunities. In dealing with a 18 ft. drop at the front of the belvedere and the need for some sort of railing element, there is a challenge to not create a visual barrier.

Hull: With 4 ft. of structure it actually becomes a 22 ft. drop at the front. We have been thinking about dropping the front area of the roof level and thereby lowering the railings for an unobstructed view. It could then become a space for people to gather and sit at the building's edge.

Sundberg: There are great opportunities with this project. The idea of an overlook is one that does not currently exist at the Seattle Center. I also think that a central green space is a crucial element that the Center has been lacking.

Swift: Be careful to not get stuck in minutia. Small solutions need to be tied back into a larger move or the project becomes a lot of little solutions. The front of the structure is really a cliff condition at 22 ft., so the big question is how to bring it down and connect the two levels simply and cleanly. The central stairway in the

previous design is not the answer, but an equally strong move is needed to connect the upper and lower areas.

Hull: We are also aware of the need for simple, bold moves that don't get lost in the minutia of small solutions. One of the suggestions made at our charette was to make the moves subtle, simple, but bold without overdoing it. A complicated solution at the roof's edge might draw attention to itself rather than the view and thus be a less effective solution.

Swift: Another way to think about it might be in terms of large spatial volumes and the impulse of those volumes. There is the volume inside the structure, the volume above, that has the impulse to flow out, and the scoop of the green space. The focus from the green space is now on the structure rather than on the fountain.

Buchan: That is a main issue with us as well.

Swift: The design needs to clearly define perspective, and how the building opens up. Where is the focus of the building?

Shrosbree: The approach from many different points is also a factor to consider. The focus from outside the space might be different than the focus from inside the space.

Swift: This is a really challenging problem. If you do bold, simple, and subtle, then the major problem is even more challenging. The slightest move will greatly affect the entire space.

Hull: What is your biggest fear with this project?

Swift: My biggest fear is that the integrity of a simple, strong vision be able to withstand the impact of a bureaucracy. So often the needs and requirements of the program can begin to chip away at the simplicity of a solution and at the driving principles which allow the solution to have its integrity.

Hull: That is always a significant problem in public work.

Layzer: Natural lighting will be another challenge since this is a north facing building.

Hull: I typically prefer the more even north light. The building's shadow will be a factor. We are also looking at integrating the land forms into the building.

Sundberg: How the shape of this bowl gets resolved with the shape of the building is one of the most difficult issues. You might think about using light monitors on the roof terrace. These would give better lighting inside the building below and could be used to mark the transition between the road and the belvedere.

Hull: I agree that the light needs to be balanced. They could really enliven the experience on the roof space as well.

Buchan: The major festivals are really salivating over the potential uses for this space.

Sundberg: Conceptually it is a very usable design; they can use the top, the inside of the building, and the green space.

Wagoner: This concept, in a sense, triples the usable space.

Hull: This scheme does have a large amount of usable spaces. It goes back to the issue of not piecemealing the project.

Swift: Are you developing a group of principles, critical scale issues, or tools that will guide your groups through the decision making process.

Hull: We have an informal set of guiding principles for maintaining the project's integrity as it is designed. We should probably just formalize what we are now using as a guide.

Swift: Also consider how this ties into the larger scale and the Center Master Plan.
Shrosbree: There are many different areas in the Seattle Center to consider when designing the Center's central area.
Hansmire: The Center has had too many things, not too few. It has always lacked a central element. Eliminating one or two things to create a unifying central feature will be beneficial.
Sundberg: If there was a very strong, simple central element, it could offset the surrounding messiness or confusion.
Hull: We should probably come back soon with the interim schematic development.
Swift: This is a very important design project.
Batra: How is the building ADA accessible?
Hull: There is an elevator connecting the two levels.
Swift: I am assuming that your landscape architect will be actively involved.
Hull: We have already gone through the contract negotiations.

ACTION: The Commission commends the design team for presenting at such an early stage and recommends approval of the plan as presented in pre-design. The Commission recommends that the design team concentrate on developing a focus and better integrating the spaces while remembering that this project is more of a landscape scheme than an architectural scheme.

090497.2 Project: **STATE ROUTE 519**
Phase**:** Schematics
Presenters: Les Rubstello, Washington State Department of Transportation
Audrey Moreland, Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas
Craig Frey, Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas
Leslie Eamel, Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas
Attendees: Steve Pearce, Office of Management and Planning
Time: 1hr. 15min. (0.3%)

The current State Route 519 connects the Port of Seattle with the I-5 and I-90 freeways along Royal Brougham and Alaskan Way. The proposed SR 519 will bridge over the railroad tracks at Atlantic Street and include an on/off-ramp to the freeways at 4th Ave. The design team was asked to identify a pallet of design elements to be used in the project. The design team presented a series of design elements, each with 4 options. These options include the City standard and the recommended choice of the design team. The range of elements includes plant choices, railing details, street lighting, information kiosks, bike racks, paving patterns, etc. The design team made its selections based on three criteria: appropriateness for the area, low level of required maintenance, and cohesiveness with the new ballpark. Final selections are scheduled to be made at the end of the year with design development following.

Discussion:

Hansmire: Is the highway structure a standard concrete box beam?
Rubstello: It varies; we are primarily using concrete box beam, but need to use steel over the railroad tracks to allow for the clear span.

Hansmire: A steel ramp structure down to the stadium might be more in keeping with the stadium language, is that an option.

Rubstello: The side of the ramp will not be visible from the stadium due to other structures, all one would see is the paved surface. The bridge will have more detailed concrete.

Hansmire: Is the Seattle standard street lamp also going to be used on the ramp and the bridge.

Frey: The Seattle standard will be used both on the street and on the structure.

Hansmire: I see the standard lamp fixture as a surface street fixture, not elevated structure fixture. It doesn't fit the freeway style lighting needed on the structure.

Rubstello: We are trying very hard to make the section between 1st and 4th not look like a freeway. The speed will be posted at 30 mph. and it will be operated as a city street. I-90 will officially begin at 4th, where there will be a traffic signal. East of the signal will be the I-90 onramp, west of the signal will be like a pedestrian friendly city street.

Swift: Where do you see pedestrian movement occurring? Where do you see the opportunities or design elements occurring?

Rubstello: On the top of the structure we have two sidewalks, 20 ft. on the north side and 8 ft. on the south side. The ramps will also have sidewalks. There will be a stair down to a park area below the structure.

Frey: The small park can be accessed from many different directions.

Hansmire: So the freeway starts at 4th Ave. Does the freeway architecture also start at 4th.

Rubstello: Yes. There will be no pedestrian access to the freeway portion.

Swift: Have you been talking with the stadium's pedestrian improvement plan people?

Rubstello: We have the pedestrian improvement plan done by NBBJ, which was our starting point.

Batra: Why the difference in sidewalk widths? My concern is that people will cross the street in order to get on the larger sidewalk with faster moving pedestrian traffic.

Rubstello: They are designed to handle pedestrian traffic patterns described in the EIS. For the 15 min. peak time after games, the street can be blocked off and used entirely by pedestrians. We saw no need to design large sidewalks for a 15 min. window of use after games. The sidewalks are larger than needed for off-peak time.

Moreland: The use of bollards will allow for street/sidewalk delineation, while also allowing one lane of the street out of four to be utilized at necessary times.

Hansmire: I don't think the proposed bollards will withstand abuse of an urban setting. You might also look at soffit lighting on the columns. Up-lighting the freeway will provide a better light with less future maintenance. The freeway design needs to remain simple.

Sundberg: The columns under the freeway are a significant rhythmic feature and lighting them could really increase the animation of the structure without a lot of added detail.

Rubstello: Since the ballpark is using the single globe, Chief Seattle base fixtures, we are continuing that language down to 4th Ave.

Hansmire: There needs to be clear understanding and definition at the street level between the urban streetscape and the freeway setting.

Batra: How did you choose the suggested bike rack type?

Moreland: It's a very durable bike rack. They are low maintenance and are well used throughout the city.

Hansmire: Are the handrails of wire mesh, and does that have to meet strength codes for vehicular guardrails.

Frey: It is a wire mesh design, but since it sits on a concrete parapet at the back of the sidewalk, it does not act as a vehicular guardrail.

Swift: I understand that this is a package of urban design tools. There needs to be a structuring of urban design goals to ensure urban design scale elements don't get cut in the budgeting process. How are you structuring the implementation of these items.

Rubstello: Do you mean prioritizing?

Swift: Yes, I would urge you to do so, if you haven't already. I also urge that you coordinate with the pedestrian improvement plan for the stadium. I think that you might try eliminating some of the proposed items, like tree grates where not necessary, in exchange for more plantings. The project needs to remain as simple as possible.

Frey: We are trying to keep in mind simplicity, compatibility with the ballpark area, and also anticipation of future development.

Moreland: NBBJ is one of our sub-consultants for this project, so we have been working closely with them.

Wagoner: Plant survival is a key issue in such a harsh environment with large surges of pedestrian use. It is such an important addition to the area, that longevity seems of primary importance.

Hansmire: I agree with the need for simplicity in this project. You need to start as simple as possible. For reasons of durability and longevity, I suggest that you use thermal plastic treatments at crosswalks rather than inlaid concrete. The concrete will crack and break out leaving it worse than before.

Rubstello: The railroad requires that when we cross their property , we install throw barriers. Our standard is just chain-link fence, but we were thinking that it might be a place for developing public art. Is that idea in keeping with your desires for simplicity?

Hansmire: It has been done other places with subtle abstract forms painted on the screen. It creates an interesting treatment, without being too overwhelming.

Sundberg: How will you go about incorporating artists in this project?

Rubstello: We have two choices. One would be to have DOT personnel provide the artwork. We also want to try involving a local artist, but the process is not a written policy. The last DOT artwork done was at I-90 in the Mercer Island area. We do have some funding for the implementation of an art component in the project.

Layzer: Most of the design seems oriented toward the peak pedestrian flows after a ball game. What about pedestrian usage before games and at other times; are there points of interest or meeting places?

Moreland: One of those types of places is at the base of the stairs. Benches, information kiosks, a public address system broadcasting from the stadium, and low traffic volumes will help create a usable gathering space.

Wagoner: Where are the proposed transit stops?

Rubstello: There are two stops on 4th Ave., but they are not the major transit stops for ballpark users. The County wants people to use the E3 busway after the games to avoid the after-game traffic.

Wagoner: What would be the pedestrian route to the E3 station area?

Rubstello: There are two. Those leaving the home plate entrance would use the wide sidewalk wrapping around to the southwest corner of 4th Ave. and Royal Brougham. Then it is just one stop light across the street away from the E3. There is continuing discussion between the County, City, and the stadiums about a Royal Brougham pedestrian bridge from E3 right into the upper level of the baseball stadium, all elevated above the street level.

Batra: What is the grade of the sidewalk on the ramp and is it ADA usable?

Rubstello: They vary from 8% down to about 6.5%, and are not the primary handicap routes to the ballpark. There will be handicap parking in the ballpark garage.

Hansmire: Is the metal hardware galvanized or painted.

Rubstello: It is undecided as yet.

Layzer: Does the City anticipate the space underneath the structure being used for venders and other types of commercial activities before events.

Pearce: There is not enough activity to support that kind of use. It isn't considered viable with the projected pedestrian loads.

Swift: I thought of Ross Dam as an example of a compelling structure with urban design elements added in a way that further enhance the design. The challenge is figuring out how to integrate those tools to meet urban design and functional objectives in a manner in which there is a seamless mesh. You should next take a look at what is essential about the design goals, and what elements support the design goals. The project needs some close refinement.

Sundberg: Understatement is the key.

Hansmire: Using the stadium language of masonry with steel elements bolted to it might be a theme to continue through this project.

Frey: The sidewalk patterns as well as the railings and light fixtures, painted the historic green color, will match those used at the ballpark.

Swift: Are you also developing suggested locations of the proposed elements as well?

Frey: We will, as far as possible in schematic design.

ACTION: The Commission appreciates the early presentation and requests another review of the final recommendations as they approach the design phase. The Commission recommends early clarification of element locations, the use of column up-lighting, and an overall emphasis on simplicity.

090497.3 Project: **HALLER LAKE MAINTENANCE FACILITY**
Phase: Master Plan
Presenters: Barbara Brannon, Executive Services Department
Peter Greaves, Greaves Architecture
Sergio Chin-Lei, Greaves Architecture
Time: 1 hr. (0.3%)

Haller Lake Maintenance Facility is bordered by a residential area, a trailer park to the south, and a commercial district to the northwest, and therefore acts as a buffer between these different

areas. The Haller Lake Maintenance Facility Master Plan of 1991 was updated in 1994. A drainage and waste water building is the only capitol improvement implemented from the 1994 Master Plan. The proposed changes to the site include consolidating the material storage in the yard, separating large and small vehicular access to the site, creating an internal noise buffer by relocating smaller vehicles and quieter uses on the side of the site nearest the Haller Lake residential area. Implementation of the plan is estimated to take 5-10 years due to constant use of the site during redevelopment. A fueling facility is currently under construction on the site.

Discussion

Swift: What is the range of department users at the site?

Brannon: It is used by a wide range of departments; Engineering Department, DAS street maintenance workers, street use inspectors, drainage inspector dispatch, solid waste, etc. It is a large dispatching site for workers to start at in the morning. It is a 24 hour facility.

Hansmire: Is there any night lighting?

Greaves: The site is primarily illuminated by lights on the buildings. There are no high pole lights. Part of our suggestion is to provide better security lighting, but it should have a low impact on the neighborhood.

Brannon: On-site parking is not usually provided at these sites, but due to the lack of street parking in the area, it is necessary.

Hansmire: Is the site fenced continuously?

Brannon: No. The Arts Commission recently installed a series of panels on the south side. They incorporate artistic panels with bamboo growing between them.

Swift: What is the degree of permeability at the site? Can you describe the hierarchy of public and private delineation.

Brannon: There is no public use of the facilities in the center of the site. The public only uses the household waste facility at the edge of the site, which operates independent of the rest of the site.

Swift: Could a person walk through the site?

Greaves: No. There are sections that are fenced off. The fencing is not necessarily continuous at this time. Our goal is to secure the site.

Hansmire: It sounds like you are trying to develop visual buffering between the neighborhood and the required industrial uses on the site. I appreciate your effort to develop this buffer without getting fussy about the industrial nature of the site. I recommend that more low elevation lighting be added.

Swift: I like that the site is not fenced.

Brannon: The site uses trees, ecology blocks, and other various fencing methods.

Hansmire: It needs to be identified to people that they can't walk through the site.

Swift: What is the time schedule, sequence of events for this project?

Greaves: Our next step is developing an implementation strategy. It is a continuously occupied site, therefore rearrangement of uses is complicated. The plan will probably take 5-10 years to implement. Definition of the steps is the first task.

Layzer: Are there other community interests that have not been mentioned?

Greaves: Most concerns were taken care of with the street vacations and the detention pond. There was a desire for internal buffering which we are trying to create with new

structures and by rearranging the uses. Quieter uses have been limited to the east border, with noisier uses at the north edge, away from the residential area.

Hansmire: Given the industrial nature of the site, it seems that you have mitigated as much as possible.

ACTION: The Commission recommends approval of the Master Plan as presented and urges that the relationship with the neighborhood be continued.

090497.4 **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

Action Items

A. MINUTES OF AUGUST 21, 1997 Approved as amended.

Discussion Items

B. CENTRAL WATERFRONT REVIEW TEAM: Wagoner reported.

C. PIKE STREET PROJECT UPDATE: Staff updated the Commission on the completed Pike Street Improvements Project document.

D. MUNICIPAL CENTER UPDATE: Commissioners discussed.